



Carlisle City Council

Report Place Scrutiny Panel

Report details

Meeting Date:	1 st December 2022
Portfolio:	Environment and Transport
Key Decision:	No
Policy and Budget Framework	No
Public / Private	Public
Title:	Talkin Tarn Management Arrangements
Report of:	Deputy Chief Executive
Report Number:	CS 38/22

Purpose / Summary:

The purpose of this report to update the panel on potential management arrangements at Talkin Tarn Country Park following the Panel's visit to site to explore the options to maximise the sites potential in delivering the Council's priorities.

Recommendations:

To review the options appraisal

Tracking

Executive:	
Scrutiny:	Place SP 01 12 22
Council:	

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In 2005 Carlisle City Council took responsibility for the management of Talkin Tarn following a transfer from Cumbria County Council.
- 1.2 Talkin Tarn is a 74 Hectare Country Park with a natural glacial tarn, woodland and grazing fields with formal and informal paths. There is a pay and display car park, camping field, toilet block, office/workshop building, two boathouses, education cabin and a building with tearoom, shop, kiosk and changing facilities for water sports users. There is a separate boat storage facility for Talkin Tarn rowing club and temporary wooden building that the water sports provider operates from.
- 1.3 One million pounds was invested by the Council at Talkin Tarn in 2005/6 including the construction of the Education Cabin, toilet block and site office alongside structural improvements to the tearoom building.

2. CURRENT MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

- 2.1 Carlisle City Council owns the freehold for Talkin Tarn and the operational management is through a series of internal and external arrangements.

2.2 Healthy City Team

Green Spaces Staff

- Oversee operation of catering facilities
- Site H&S surveys
- Tree Surveys
- Play area safety surveys
- Water quality surveys
- Bin emptying
- Winter maintenance
- Fire checks
- Site development work
- Water sport club liaison
- Liaising with contractors
- Partnership working opportunities I.e. Fellfoot Forward
- Business development and grant funding

Tearoom Catering Staff

- Responding to on site public & tourism related enquires and customer liaison in terms of on-site presence.
- Issuing of permits – fishing/open water swimming/boat launch/group water sport permits
- First Aid cover and filling in accident/incident forms.
- First point of contact for incidents/emergencies.
- Liaising with contractors to grant access to buildings on behalf of property services

- Taking bookings for campsite/ education cabin / Alex Boathouse
- Checking insurance documents of visiting 3rd parties
- Liaison between water sport provider and customers
- Event management and catering i.e. outdoor theatre, weddings, birthday parties etc.
- Catering related cleaning of premises.

2.3 Property Services

- Building/asset maintenance Management
- Klargestor (sewage treatment) management
- Legionella (water) Monitoring
- Equipment serving Boilers/Burglar alarms/Fire alarms
- PAT testing
- Repairs

2.4 Neighbourhood Services

- Maintenance of ticket machines in the car park.

2.5 Within Talkin Tarn there are also lease/contract arrangements:

- Water sports – Contract (£1,000 income per year plus profit share)
- Sailing Club – Lease (£990 income per year)
- Talkin Rowing Club – Lease. (£1,000 income per year)
- Grazing land – annual agricultural lets c. £1,300 income per year
- Grant income – c.£1,500 income per year

2.6 Water safety

- Water safety is managed through internal risk assessments, which are reviewed annually, and individual arrangements with the clubs and water sports provider.
- The on-site catering team are responsible for issuing permits.

2.7 The Green Spaces Team and Tearoom Staff have implemented changes to the operation of the catering service during lockdown and the following period of restrictions. They are currently operating services from the downstairs kiosk, only offering a takeaway service.

2.8 Operating from the downstairs kiosk has allowed service to continue whilst adhering to Covid-19 restrictions. As a result, operating costs have reduced and at the same time increasing the surplus. This type of service has been popular during the pandemic as it allowed a catering service to continue, whilst adhering to restrictions.

3. FINANCE

3.1 The budgets for Talkin Tarn are split into two areas; Talkin Tarn (site and property management) and the Boathouse Tearoom (BHTR). Where surpluses in income are achieved, they are re-invested on site as appropriate.

3.2 2022/23 Budget

Talkin Tarn income expectation (£)	(78,300)
Talkin Tarn expenditure expectation (£)	164,800
Talkin Tarn (surplus)/Cost expectation (£)	86,500
BHTR income expectation (£)	(236,400)
BHTR expenditure expectation (£)	224,700
BHTR (surplus)/Cost expectation (£)	(11,700)
Combined (surplus)/Cost expectation (£)	74,800

3.3 Previous actual combined (surplus)/cost expectation

Year	(surplus)/cost expectation (£)	(surplus)/cost actual	Comments
2022/23	74,800	TBC	
2021/22	88,100	24,692.67	An additional £15k was carried forward in respect of the Dark Skies project
2020/21	90,800	69,175.55	Includes reduced opening due to Covid
2019/20	62,700	66,776.73	An additional c £50k of site improvements were also spent
2018/19	71,000	27,248.39	An additional c £19k of site improvements
2017/18	35,000	32,610.60	An additional c £60k of site improvements
2016/17	60,000	7,548.57	

3.4 The budget expectations highlighted above include internal recharges.

Year	Recharges (included in surplus/cost) (£)
2022/23	70,600.00
2021/22	82,806.72
2020/21	83,900.04
2019/20	55,099.92
2018/19	55,000.00
2017/18	57,000.00
2016/17	50,100.00

3.5 The current projected out turn position for 2022/23 after period 7 and before any re-investment into the site is a surplus of c. £20,000.

4. STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 The site is managed through the Green Spaces staff within the Healthy City Team.
- 4.2 The general site management forms part of the duties of Green Spaces staff. These staff are not based at Talkin Tarn, but visit when required.
- 4.3 The catering staff, based at Talkin Tarn, are made up of the Visitor and Catering Manager (0.92 fte), Kitchen Supervisor (0.65 fte), Waiter/Waitress (1.14 fte).
- 4.4 Catering staff currently play a multi-functional role and act as a first point of contact for visitors and any on site management /safety issues.

5. DEVELOPING FUTURE OPTIONS

- 5.1 A key issue discussed during the panel's site visit in the summer 2022 was focused on the future financial stability of the site.
- 5.2 Following discussions around how to maximise the potential of the catering offer onsite an architect was engaged to provide some options and budget estimates
- 5.3 The solution proposed is to put an extension onto the front of the building in place of the balcony so that all the catering would be downstairs and allow a full offer despite the weather/season with extra seating.
- 5.4 This would then allow the upstairs to be let out to provide an additional income.
- 5.5 The architect assessed carrying out internal alterations to provide more space however due to the age of the building this was not deemed economically feasible.
- 5.6 The preliminary budget costings for this work are contained in the appendices.

6. Contribution to the Carlisle Plan Priorities

- 6.1 "Continue to improve the quality of our local environment and green spaces so that everyone can enjoy living, working in and visiting Carlisle"

Contact details:

Contact Officer: Luke Leathers

Ext: 7535

Appendices attached to report:

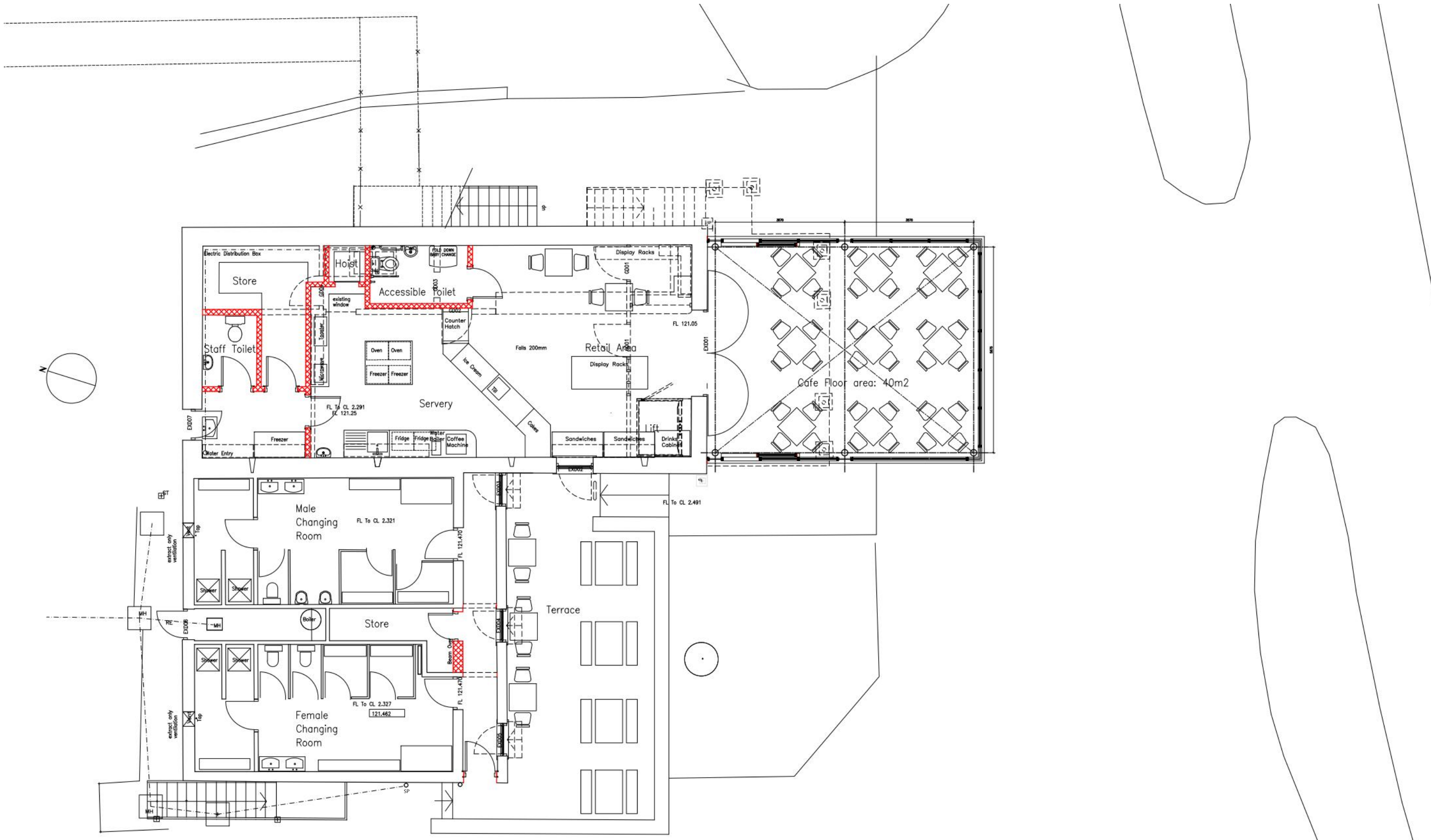
Proposed first floor plan. Proposed ground floor plan. Budget costings (part B)

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government Act 1972 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- None

Corporate Implications:

Legal	
Property Services	
Finance	The proposed redevelopment of the facilities at Talkin Tarn would need to identify appropriate funding mechanisms and would require the project to be added to the capital programme. This should be supported by an appropriate business case outlining the financial and other benefits of undertaking the redevelopment, as well as any risks and additional revenue costs from operating a larger facility and whether additional costs could be funded from additional income generated.
Equality	
Information Governance	



Ground Floor Plan

Aug 22 Preliminary Issue

ALASTAIR MCGREGOR

ARCHITECT

6 St. Georges Crescent Carlisle Cumbria CA3 9NL

T 01228 524211 M 07711 720930

e-mail alastairmcgregor@btinternet.com

Project Proposed Tea Room Alterations, Talkin Tarn for Carlisle City Council

Drawing PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN – OPTION C

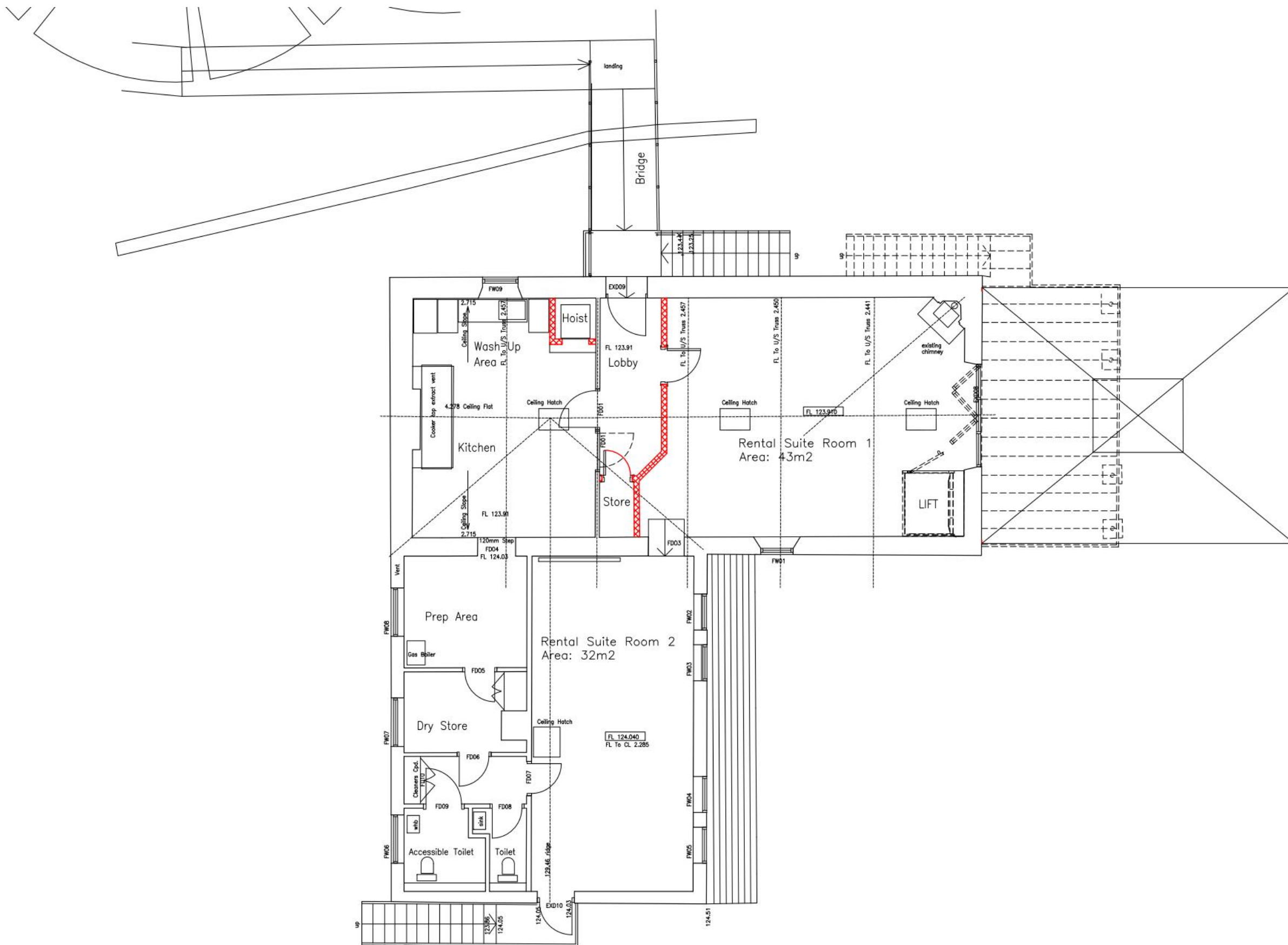
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Date Aug2022

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First Floor Plan

ALASTAIR MCGREGOR

ARCHITECT

6 St. Georges Crescent Carlisle Cumbria CA3 9NL

T 01228 524211 M 07711 720930

e-mail alastairmcgregor@btinternet.com

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Drawing PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN – OPTION C

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